



## Woodlin School District R-104

### *Celebrating 55 years 1960-2015*

October 19, 2017

Dear Chairman Pai,

This letter is in response to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Public Notice which, among other things, considers changes to the E-Rate program. Before delving into my response to the proposed changes, I want to thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program and for the critical programmatic and policy changes the commission adopted in 2014. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

Woodlin is a small rural school located 80 miles east of metro Denver. Enrollment consists of 105 students PreK-12 grades, all located on one campus. We have a free and reduced rate over 50%. Many of those families have limited access to technology in the house; therefore, utilizing the school or library for technology needs outside the normal school hours. We have limited opportunity for advanced course offerings, as a result we have been able to leverage E-Rate dollars to provide countless courses that would have not been possible without a reliable high speed internet connection. Some of those classes 2017-18 school year include Spanish, remedial math, etc. Our staff have also benefited from professional development opportunities from the ECBOCES, cutting travel costs and saving a great deal of time away from the district and their students.

Colorado has greatly reduced state funding over the last seven years. At the beginning of the Category 2 start up years, the Notice mentions that participation in the start of the E-Rate program was not as expected. Here in Colorado, many of us in rural schools were in survival mode and many elective purchases, even if partially funded were not pursued. Now that we know our state funding will continue to be limited, assistance like Category 2 E-Rate dollars are more important than ever. This year, we did expand our Category 2 to purchase Ubiquiti routers and wifi. The E-Rate program is succeeding in its mission. As the FCC moves forward with this public notice, it is prudent to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works. Any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential and ensuring the FCC remains a good steward of the changes adopted 2014, allowing those changes to progress and play out as intended.

E-Rate played a critical role is the rapid and significant expansion of connectivity in schools, and the 2014 modernization was a much needed update to ensure more schools and libraries are connected to broadband. The E-Rate's investment in Category 2 Wi-Fi and internal connections funding is extremely valuable and could not be replaced by school, district or state funds.

15400 County Road L, Box  
185  
Woodrow, CO 80757  
970-386-2223  
Fax 970-386-2241  
www.woodlinschool.com

Rose Cronk-Superintendent  
*Board of Education*  
Doug Vondy- President  
Jack Priest - Vice President  
Lisa Kauffman - Secretary  
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Woodlin School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person(s) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

The Athletic Director,  
15400 CR L, Woodrow, CO  
80757 (970) 386-2223 X  
57, or

The Superintendent, 15400  
CR L, Woodrow, CO  
80757 (970) 386-2223 X  
12

If changes were to be made to E-Rate, our suggestion is that additional categories be added so that we can move beyond the limits currently defined.

In closing, I reiterate my district's continued, strong support for and reliance upon the E-Rate program for being able to access and afford the high-speed connectivity that is so central to our students' learning. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rose Cronk, Supt." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rose Cronk, Superintendent Woodlin School District R-104